



The Resilience Formula

Re•sil•ience: the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; the ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape. Resilience, as defined, is something that we all wish we had more of, especially in these seemingly difficult times. Our lives seem to be more stressful than ever, filled with long days of work, meetings, events, tragedies, responsibilities, natural disasters and constant stimulation. This perpetual change and constant uncertainty causes distress, perpetuating mental health issues, alcoholism, smoking, lack of physical activity and poor eating habits. It is crucial now more than ever to learn and teach others how to become resilient.

Although we can go into each day hoping that everything will go smoothly, human suffering is inevitable. So instead of wishing that bad things would never happen, it is imperative that people learn how to be resilient through life's challenges, especially when it comes to work. Polls suggest that over 40% of American workers find their jobs to be stressful or very stressful and 21% of people polled say that their job is the # 1 stress in their life. Experts often refer to stress as the black plague of the 21st century due to the high association between stress and disease.

“If stress is the black plague of our century, resilience is the antidote.”

In today's world of constant change and tremendous uncertainty, it behooves us all to flex our resiliency

muscles and stay above the fray. It is often said that the most desired by many is often the hardest to achieve. Fortunately, experts like Brian Luke Seaward Ph.D. have dedicated their careers to finding solutions for helping others learn to cope with stress so they can move on to achieve their highest human potential.

Here are a few tips from Dr. Seaward that can help you strengthen your resilience muscles.

Put Things in Proper Perspective

When times are tough, we can become blinded by stress, which complicates things considerably. Negativity can become a downward spiral that only perpetuates more stress. So, it's time to look up. It's time to take off the blinders that encourage fear and frustration and take stock of your assets. It is also time to put a positive spin on a bad situation. First, list ten things you are grateful for (e.g., your health, your eyesight, your sense of humor). Write them down. Next, list 10 things you take for granted (what would you miss terribly if you didn't have it?) Next, what do you have going for you? List these qualities too. Finally, post these 3 lists where you can see them every day. Make it a habit to focus on the positive. A positive attitude is the wind beneath your wings.

Strengthen your Support Group

No man (or woman) is an island. We all need friends. Good friends. Real friends. Not just Facebook friends, but real people you can call on the phone, meet up for coffee/tea/whatever, look square in the eyes, and bear your soul. Today the high tech world is leaving many people isolated and alienated (and hence depressed). A large part of resiliency is self-reliance, but an important part is connections and support groups. We need both. How strong is your support group? What can you do to strengthen it? Make a plan to make friends with one new person this month. Invite someone out for coffee or go for a walk. Or perhaps just sit and talk and laugh. Perhaps it's someone at work. Perhaps you start going to an Alanon meeting. Perhaps you meet someone at the golf course or swimming pool. Find someone in the next few months that you have something in common with, invest some time and to bring into your circle of friends.

Vitamin H

Find 1 Humorous Thing a Day. Humor is on everyone's list of resiliency assets, and it should be on yours too. Some people call it Vitamin H, and essential nutrient of the soul. Without a doubt, humor is an essential skill in coping with stress of any kind. Comic relief takes the sting out of a bad situation. Humor, however, doesn't come looking for us, we have to go meet up with it. First comes an attitude that there are funny situations and events in life to appreciate (There ARE!) From irony and slapstick to double entendres and self-deprecating humor; humor is out there—everywhere! Start looking. Second, start a tickler notebook, a collection of your favorite jokes, jpegs, birthday cards, Christmas cards, comic strips (e.g., Calvin and Hobbes), etc., ANYTHING that makes you smile and laugh. Pull it out when you might be having a bad day to restore your emotional levity. Have you had your Vitamin H today?"

- Seaward, Brian L., PhD. The Resilience Formula. Welcoa News. Sept 29, 2017.